

Message Text

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12

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 ACDA-07

OES-06 COME-00 NASA-01 /033 W

----- 075236

R 150759Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3217

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

DMA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 9769

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, TH

SUBJ: SPECIAL GEODETIC SATELLITE PROGRAM

REF: A) 72 STATE 093883 B) 72 BANGKOK 18321

1. ON INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED REF A, EMBASSY IN 1972 REQUESTED SUPREME COMMAND PERMISSION FOR INSTALLATION OF A GEODETIC SATELLITE MONITORING STATION AT UDORN RTAFB, TO OPERATE BETWEEN JANUARY AND JULY 1973. SUPREME COMMAND APPROVED THIS REQUEST, AND FURTHER DETAILS WERE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE U.S. DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY (DMA) AND THE ROYAL THAI SURVEY DEPARTMENT (RTSD).

2. ALTHOUGH, AS FAR AS OUR RECORDS SHOW, NO FORMAL REQUEST WAS MADE FOR EXTENSION OF THE PROGRAM BEYOND JULY 1973, THE MONITORING STATION CONTINUED TO OPERATE AT UDORN UNTIL USAF OPERATIONS THERE RECENTLY CEASED. AT THAT TIME, THE MONITORING STATION WAS MOVED TO THE ROOF OF FIFTH FIELD HOSPITAL, A U.S. MILITARY-LEASED BUILDING IN BANGKOK, ITSELF SOON TO BE VACATED.

3. DMA WISHES TO CONTINUE ITS MONITORING ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND, PREFERABLY OPERATING FROM THE GROUNDS OF THE RTSD, WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN SOUNDED AND AGREES IN PRINCIPLE. DMA IS PREPARED, IF REQUESTED BY RTSD, TO OFFER RTSD THE USE OF THE PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT FOR RTSD PURPOSES

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WHEN NOT IN USE BY THE U.S. WE WOULD EXPECT RTSD TO WANT SUCH

USE, WHICH WOULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE TO IT.

4. RTSD BELIEVES THAT THE OPERATION SHOULD BE REGULARIZED, EITHER BY A NEW EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN DMA AND RTSD OR AT THE EMBASSY -- RTG LEVEL. IF THE DMA-RTSD ROUTE WERE CHOSE, RTSD WOULD SUBMIT THE CASE TO SUPREME COMMAND, WHICH MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT PUT IT THROUGH MOD TO MFA.

5. THE MONITORING HAS IN THE PAST BEEN CONDUCTED BY TWO DMA CIVILIAN PERSONNEL WHO COME TO THAILAND, WITH OFFICIAL PASSPORTS AND 30-DAY VISAS, FOR PERIODS OF ABOUT 60 DAYS, TWO OR THREE TIMES A YEAR. THE VISAS HAVE BEEN EXTENDED TO COVER THE FULL PERIOD OF STAY. IF THE PERSONNEL ARE IN FUTURE TO REMAIN IN THAILAND FULL-TIME, A MORE APPROPRIATE STATUS SHOULD BE WORKED OUT WITH THE RTG. THE BEST WAY TO PROCEED, THEREFORE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF OTHER RECENT EVENTS, WOULD BE THROUGH THE EMBASSY-MFA CHANNEL. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE EMBASSY WERE AUTHORIZED TO OFFER THE USE OF THE PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT TO THE THAI DURING NON-TRACKING PROGRAM PERIODS, INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR THEM TO ASK. IN APPROACHING MFA, WE WOULD NOT PROPOSE TO LINK THE SUBJECT WITH THE RESDUAL FORCES QUESTION.

6. DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS REQUESTED.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, TRACKING STATIONS, GEODETIC SURVEYS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGKO09769
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760142-1095
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760460/aaaabyje.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 93883, 76 BANGKOK 18321
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 SEP 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; WITHDRAWN <02 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA, REFER TO DMA>; RELEASED <29 SEP 2004 by ullricre>; APPROVED <04 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPECIAL GEODETIC SATELLITE PROGRAM
TAGS: MARR, TH, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006